

from school by 50 percent, can reduce drug abuse by 50 percent, can reduce teenage pregnancy, violence and dropout rates significantly.

We think that by utilizing our seniors more effectively, we can serve the country well, and particularly the youth of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD), and he will discuss other aspects of the Call to Service Act.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) for yielding; and I come from a State with a good football team, but I am delighted that the greatest mind, at least in my era of following college sports, would see fit to allow a young Member like me to partner with him to do something that in the long run will benefit young people for many, many years to come.

It is difficult to expand on what the gentleman from Nebraska has already said, but this bill gives my generation an opportunity to do something that we have not been able to do. For so long we have been reduced in a lot of ways, and some of us have chosen, to be spectators to conflict involving challenges to our values and freedoms. We are hopeful with our friends on the other side of the aisle and this bill's companion, S. 1792, which was introduced yesterday by Senators MCCAIN and BAYH, we are hopeful that this legislation will attract the support of Democrats and Republicans alike in both Chambers.

Mr. Speaker, the district of the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) and my district could not be any more different than they are. He is from a rural area in Nebraska; I am from an urban area in Memphis, Tennessee. We are hopeful that regardless of who Americans are, where they live, or how they may identify themselves politically, this bill will attract the support of all of our colleagues, largely because it invites involvement.

The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) spoke about the need for this and how critical it is; but just to give more specifics, the purpose of the bill is to basically expand the AmeriCorps program. We propose a fivefold expansion of the traditional program, including new opportunities, as has already been mentioned, for senior service, work study and homeland defense. Specifically, over half of the program's expansion would be used to augment homeland defense in the areas of law enforcement and public health. Additionally, the legislation would provide new options for military enlistment, including expansion of the Montgomery GI bill and the establishment of a new 18-18-18 short-term enlistment option.

These provisions acknowledge that the GI bill has not kept pace with inflation, and a growing shortage exists for entry-level service needs. The short-term option would qualify E1 level recruits for an \$18,000 education

bonus after service of 18 months of active duty and 18 months of reserve duty.

Finally, in an ongoing effort to enhance national service, the bill also sets accountability standards and provides for a new demonstration choice voucher plan, not the voucher plan that my colleagues often think about, but a voucher plan providing grants for young people to apply in areas of public service.

We believe the Call to Service Act presents an immeasurable opportunity to seize on those attributes that define us as Americans and make us proud to serve in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding me this time and both Senators for their support; and I hope that all of our colleagues will see fit to support this important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

COMMENDING MAJORITY LEADER DICK ARMEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to talk about a real stalwart in this House, and to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) for his hard work and to remind our Members about what his leadership and effectiveness have meant to the success of our majority.

When DICK ARMEY first got to Washington, they said his ideas were out of step; but now America has caught up to Dick ArmeY. He stood firm against communism, and the Iron Curtain failed. He insisted that the welfare system was broken, and millions of Americans are now earning paychecks and have greater self-worth because they have entered the workplace. He took on a tough job of realigning our military base structure and our Armed Forces are more effective today because their bases better support their new mission.

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DICK ARMEY said repeatedly that punishing success was not part of the American dream. And he helped Presidents Reagan and Bush pass pro-growth tax cuts that raised our economic security. Many Americans now understand that a rising economic tide lifts all boats because DICK ARMEY explained it to them.

He reminded us that God is a part of all of our lives and millions of people now question why God has been driven out of our national lives. He fought laws that would have weakened our

Constitution, and America remains the freest and most secure country in the world. He said that red tape and unneeded regulations were stifling growth and shortchanging job creation and now, despite the blow from September 11, our American economy is the healthiest, most vibrant and most productive in the world.

He knew that if Republicans clearly explained our goals as the majority party, we would earn broad support from the American people, and the Contract With America helped build the first Republican majority in four decades.

He arrives and departs Washington as fundamentally the same man that stood next to me to take his oath of office in 1985, but the Washington he will leave behind in 2003 is a very, very different place. He is just an ordinary man with extraordinary ideas that helped change America.

Since Republicans earned our House majority, the Federal Government has grown leaner, more efficient and more responsive to individual citizens. These changes happened because people like DICK ARMEY knew we could expect more from our government and they insisted that we do better. Our Republican majority has accomplished great things together, and our Nation is stronger, freer, and enjoys the highest living standards in the world.

Several broad principles guided our efforts: We believed that freedom is not free. We worked to ensure that our Armed Forces and the agencies protecting America had all the tools necessary to defend our country. We believed that government answers to the people. We worked to make the Federal Government more responsive, more efficient and more effective in performing its work. We believed that families are entitled to keep more of what they earn. We worked to be careful stewards of their tax dollars and insisted that every dollar was spent as wisely and effectively as it could be.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me say to DICK ARMEY, thank you, DICK, very much, for everything you have done to keep America strong and free. You can be truly proud of what the House has achieved under your leadership. There is no doubt that we will continue improving our Nation over the course of your final year. We must treasure and build upon our gift from previous generations. They left us a great country with a big heart, broad shoulders and the courage to chase hundreds of millions of dreams.

Today, the beacon of freedom is burning brightly. We need to stoke the flame, lift the lantern higher and lead freedom-loving people onward to a better and more fulfilling life.

I want to extend DICK ARMEY my deep thanks for everything he has done to make that happen. Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me offer a special thank you to Susan ArmeY for allowing America to borrow her husband all these years. Our country is a better